

CITY OF ABERDEEN  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
MINUTES

Wednesday, March 9, 2011

A meeting of the Aberdeen Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m., March 9, 2011, in the Council Chambers by Chairman Swisher.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Swisher, Commissioners Braerman, Heavey, Hersh, Kosko, Preston, and Schlottman.

OTHERS PRESENT: Councilwoman Sandra Landbeck, City Council liaison  
Phyllis Grover, Director of Planning & Community  
Development  
Matt Lapinsky, Director of Public Works (DPW)  
Gil Jones, Recording Secretary

AGENDA ITEM:

**1. Public Hearing on the draft 2011 Comprehensive Plan**

This meeting is a public hearing to present the draft 2011 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Aberdeen and receive public comment pursuant to the provisions of Article 66B, Land Use, of the Annotated Code of Maryland. This is the only item on the agenda for tonight.

Mrs. Grover advised those wishing to speak that they needed to sign in.

Mr. Swisher and Mrs. Grover introduced a Power Point presentation to be given with an overview of the history and development of the updated Comprehensive Plan. Afterward, questions will be taken. If the answer to a given question is not available tonight, the question will be researched and the answer provided in writing. All questions and answers will also be posted on the City's website. A copy of the Plan will be available for review either at City Hall, the Aberdeen Library, or by compact disk (CD) available from Mrs. Grover. Any additional questions that arise after tonight can be referred to Mrs. Grover and she will respond with the answer.

Mr. Swisher gave an overview of the previous plan and the new requirements mandated by the State: Land Use Element, Municipal Growth Element, and Water Resources Element. He also indicated the Plan has been reviewed by the Planning Commission, Harford County, and the State of Maryland, and the comments of all parties have been incorporated.

Mr. Swisher continued with a brief overview of the basic concepts of the Plan and a feel for what's in it. He pointed up the 6 important documents that the Commission uses to evaluate projects before it: Comprehensive Plan, Development Code, Zoning Map, Subdivision Regulations, Sign Code, Route 40 Overlay Regulations, and I-95 Overlay Regulations. The 17

Planning Areas were briefly described in terms of size, location, and vision of the City for their respective development.

Mr. Swisher outlined features and advantages to being in Aberdeen such as zoning, public water and sewer, rapid response police department, rapid response fire department, and community elements (churches, schools, community organizations, etc.). The aspects of potential to increase the density of land for development and protection of farms and open space through Smart Growth were also touched on.

Mr. Swisher indicated the 1-mile radius around the City limits that has been used for evaluation of outlying areas in previous Plans, as well as the planning areas of the City itself and Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG). He pointed out our geographic limits and some restrictions to future growth and expansion, as well as major roads and the railroads. Assets such as APG, Frito-Lay, and Aberdeen High School/Science and Math Academy were also indicated.

A brief review of the Planning Areas was given. Planning Area 17, APG, is newly included due to the significant changes taking place over there and the desire to be ready to assist and support them.

Mrs. Grover reviewed the requirements set down by the State of Maryland, a history of Aberdeen zoning and its Comprehensive Plan, and elements of House Bill 1141. The planning visions laid out by the State and included in the Comp Plan were stated. An overview of each chapter of the Plan was touched on, with emphasis on land available for development, the Transportation Element, housing issues, and water and sewer items. A description of each Planning Area and its size, water needs, and buffer status (if applicable) were also reviewed. The draft will be briefed to the Mayor and City Council within the next month, with adoption action to follow.

At this point the floor was opened for public comment.

Bradley R. Stover, attorney, 11 South Main Street, Bel Air, Maryland, 21014. Mr. Stover indicated he is the legal counsel for Harford Habitat for Humanity and a member of the Board of Directors for Maryland Habitat for Humanity. He expressed appreciation for the mention of Habitat in relation to affordable housing in the City and for the consideration given Habitat by the City. He also indicated that he represents the Cornblatt family and recalled his appearance before the Commission in January 2011. He reviewed the aspects and vision for Planning Area 13 expressed in the current Comprehensive Plan as they relate to potential development and projected uses. If and when his clients pursue annexation into the City, they will be seeking IBD zoning. He indicated that comprehensive plans are not legally binding. They are seeking to make their case, prior to annexation, as to why IBD zoning would be appropriate. Due to the questions raised at the previous meeting concerning residential inventory, Paul Muddiman of Morris & Ritchie Associates prepared two exhibits for presentation. These showed the size of Planning Area 13 and the flexibility IBD offers in terms of residential and multi-family residential housing in proximity to the I-95 interchange.

Paul Muddiman, Morris & Ritchie Associates (MRA), 3445 Box Hill Corporate Center Drive, Suite A, Abingdon, Maryland, 21009. Mr. Muddiman gave a presentation to justify an amendment to Planning Area 13, particularly that area north of Bush Chapel Road. The first

exhibit showed Planning Area 13 and the Cornblatt property and also spoke to questions brought up at a previous Planning Commission meeting as to what sort of activity is going on outside the City boundary. He pointed out several apartment and housing projects either planned or currently under construction in the area, such as Reserve at Riverside (400 apartment units), Berkshire Manor (290 single-family and townhouse units), Holly Woods (150 remaining units to be constructed), and Beechtree Estates (720 single-family and townhouse units). Mr. Muddiman indicated that in the last 3 years, the number of permits issued in Harford County (including Aberdeen, Bel Air, and Havre de Grace) has averaged 520 per year. From 1998 through 2001, the average was 1,600 permits per year.

Mr. Muddiman said what's being sought is not a total change in the vision for Planning Area 13, but the thought of an IBD zoning between Bush Chapel Road and the existing City boundary to give some market flexibility to allow other uses. Mr. Muddiman also pointed up additional acreage already within the City limits that is owned by the Cornblatts, and a potential access from Northeast Road to Bush Chapel Road. The proposed Cornblatt project, to be called Aberdeen Green Corporate Campus, would be a mixed-use project, with offices, restaurants, a conference center, maybe day care, retail, and apartments in the residential pods. Mr. Muddiman distributed handouts of his exhibits to the Commission members.

Mr. Swisher gave a brief review of the displayed Zoning and Planning Areas maps, as well as a map showing the Planning Areas intended as buffer areas.

Mrs. Grover indicated the draft Comp Plan can be found on the City's website, with a limited number of CDs also available.

There being no further business or public comment, the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

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Planning Commission Chairman

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Recording Secretary

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Date of Approval